The journey of the Mitteler Rebbe, Reb Dov Ber, to Haditch was unusually somber. The Rebbe, on his way to pray at the grave of his father, Rav Shneur Zalman of Liadi, was not merely meditative, but reclusive. He not only refrained from delivering the accustomed Chasidic discourses for which his disciples thirsted, but he showed no interest or desire to converse at all with the chasidim who formed his entourage. When he wished to commit some of his Torah thoughts to paper he was unable to do so, and he indicated to his close followers that he felt the approach of some impending harsh judgement from Above.

He even intimated that he felt his own end approaching. He related to his chasidim that at the time of the arrest and imprisonment of his father, Rav Shneur Zalman, two alternatives had been offered from Above: suffering or death. Rav Shneur Zalman had chosen suffering. "It seems that he left the other for me," concluded the somber Reb Dov Ber.

When the entourage arrived at Haditch the Rebbe prayed at great length at his father's grave. He also delivered a number of Chasidic discourses in the study hall which had been erected at the site. One day, after having prayed for many hours, the Rebbe appeared to his followers, his face beaming with happiness. "My father has given me his promise that they will release me from my position as Rebbe," he told them.

The chasidim had long been aware of the Rebbe's desire to journey to the Land of Israel, and they understood his words to mean that he had finally decided to make the journey. "Rebbe," they cried out, "how can you leave us like that, like sheep without a shepherd?" But the Rebbe just turned to them and said, "Don't worry, you will have my son-in-law, Reb Menachem Mendel, and he will be a faithful leader for you."

When the visit ended, the party began the homeward journey, passing through the town of Niezhin. But upon his arrival, the Rebbe fell ill and was unable to continue travelling. The most experienced physicians that could be found were called in, but none could cure the Rebbe.

They ordered complete bedrest, and even proscribed the Rebbe from delivering his customary talks to his chasidim. This advice was the most bitter for the Rebbe. For the very essence of a Rebbe is to give of himself to his chasidim. The relationship between Rebbe and chasid is a symbiotic one in which both benefit physically as well as spiritually.

His condition deteriorated steadily, until he finally lapsed into unconsciousness, evincing no apparent life force. The doctors were at a loss, when one of them said to another, "Do you want to see something very strange? If we permit the Rebbe to deliver a discourse to his followers, you will see him regain his vitality."

The scene which followed was truly amazing, as the Rebbe, fully vibrant, sat in his bed and spoke to the chasidim who crowded the house to hear his words. In the course of the talk, the Rebbe said, "Now I will tell you secrets of the Torah which have never been revealed."But just as he was about to continue, a chasid leaning forward on a bench behind the Rebbe fell. The tumult interrupted the Rebbe's thoughts and he remarked, "It seems that Heaven doesn't wish these things to be revealed."

The Rebbe's condition worsened on the night of the ninth of Kislev to the point that he could not be revived. People flocked to the house to be near the Rebbe. Suddenly the Rebbe sat up in bed, smiling and said, "I heard a voice saying, "What need has a soul like this for this world?""

The Rebbe requested that he be dressed in white garments. And then, for the first time since he had been so ill, he delivered a discourse in which he praised the Jewish people for doing mitzvot with such devotion. He bade his family and chasidim to be joyful, for joy breaks through all boundaries and bitterness. Then he continued revealing deep Chasidic philosophy. All those present were overjoyed to see that their Rebbe appeared to have recovered his strength.

The Rebbe then turned to one of his disciples and told him, "While I am speaking, watch out that I don't fall asleep. If I do, just touch me with your hand and I will wake up."

The Lubavitch Youth Organization wishes a hearty Mazal Tov to
Anna and Serge Rovner
In honor of the Bar Mitzvah of their son

Jacob יעקב נח בו ישראל

May you continue to have much Nachas and Simchos in your family

He continued delivering his discourse in a greatly heightened mental state, asking several times whether it was yet dawn. He expounded upon the words, "For with You is the source of life," and when he had finished saying the word "life" his soul left his body.

It is seen by great tzadikim that the days of their lives are measured exactly to the day. The Mitteler Rebbe passed away, as did Moses, on the exact day of his birth, thus indicating complete fulfillment. Rebbe Dov Ber was 54 years old when he passed away, exactly the same age as was his father, the Alter Rebbe when he was incarcerated in Petersburg and agreed to accept the yoke of suffering upon himself.



The boys grew up, and Esau was an expert hunter (Gen 25:27)

"Expert at deceiving his father into believing him to be pious and a scrupulous observer of the commandments," comments Rashi, the great Torah Sage. Esau's hypocrisy is symbolic of our present Exile, in which the forces of evil are not as readily identifiable as they were during previous exiles. It is for this reason that our current Exile is termed "the Exile of Edom," for the nation of Edom is descended from Esav. When Moshiach comes, the "Deliverers will go up to Mount Zion to judge the mount of Esav, and kingship will be the L-rd's." (The Rebbe, Toldot, 5750)

#### And they called his name Esav...and he called his name Yaakov (Gen. 25:25-6)

Why is the plural — "and they called his name" — used for Esav, but the singular — "and he called" — used for Yaakov? Esav is the father of all falsehood; many are those who find him attractive and seek him out. Yaakov, however, is the source of truth; only the rare individual desires his acquaintance. (Kli Yakar)

Yaakov was an honest man, a dweller of tents (Gen. 25:27) Of all the superior character traits possessed by our ancestor Yaakov, the Torah chooses "an honest man" as the highest praise, to teach us that nothing is more worthy of our respect and admiration than a life lived with honesty and righteous ness. (Shaloh HaKadosh)

Two nations are in your womb...and one nation will be stronger Than the other nation (Gen. 25:23)

Yaakov is symbolic of the Jew's G-dly soul; Esav is symbolic of man's animalistic drives and the Evil Inclination. When the G-dly soul is strengthened (through learning Torah), the Evil Inclination is weakened without effort, as a natural consequence. For just as physical darkness is dispelled when one lights a candle, so too is spiritual darkness dispelled when the light of Torah is allowed to illuminate. (Chasidic Teachings)







### REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe on the Torah portion

In this week's Torah portion, Toldot, we read about Isaac and Rebecca's twin sons, Jacob and Esau. Jacob was the wholesome, studious child while Esau was a "wild child."

Jacob our ancestor was holy, so it makes sense that the Torah tells us all about him, but why does it tell us so much about Esau?

When it came time for Isaac to give his blessings, we find that he wanted to give the blessings to Esau. It was only when Jacob dressed as Esau that he was able to receive the blessings. Why did Isaac want to give the blessings to Esau?

Isaac saw something in Esau's nature that was positive and if harnessed could do amazing things.

Isaac knew that the purpose of Judaism is to transform the physical world into a holy place. Isaac felt that though Jacob was studious, he lacked the strength and the chutzpa (brazenness) necessary to take on the physical world. Esau surely did have strength and chutzpa, what he lacked was the holiness and will to do G-d's bidding.

And Isaac was hoping to eliminate the deficit by giving Esau the blessings. When Jacob came, dressed in Esau's clothing, Isaac realized that Jacob did indeed have what it takes and was happy to give him the blessings.

Some of us have a Jacob-like disposition, some of us have a "wild child" nature. While being the wholesome studious one is special, the strong chutzpa type can accomplish amazing things if his/her energy is harnessed and directed to fulfill G-d's will. This attitude is needed especially now when we are in these last, darkest moments of exile.

We need both wholesomeness and brazenness, and Jacob proved that he had both. He was by nature Jacob, and he was Esau when he had to be. This is why both are spoken about, because we also need to know the qualities of Esau if we are going to harness his nature to change this world.

Both types of "children" are a source of pride to G-d. One could venture to say that when a "wild child" directs his nature to the right things this is an even greater accomplishment and gives G-d great joy.

Ultimately, you should not look at your nature as an obstacle, but rather, as a blessing and opportunity to make a difference. Whether Jacob or Esau, you have a lot to contribute, you can change the world into G-d's home. Now go make a difference!

Adapted by Rabbi Yitzi Hurwitz from the teachings of the Rebbe, yitzihurwitz blogspot.com. Rabbi Hurwitz, who is battling ALS, and his wife Dina, are emissaries of the Rebbe in Temecula, Ca.

### Do Not Remove

Surely you've seen the "Do Not Remove" tag on furniture – couches, mattresses, pillows, etc. Sometimes the phrase "Under Penalty of Law" is in the same big letters. In smaller letters, something you probably never paid attention to, is a list of components – what's inside the pillow, what the couch is made of, how fire retardant the material is.

What would happen if you did rip off the tag? Would the mattress police come and arrest you? Would some government agency revoke your couch potato license? No, not at all. If you rip "Do not Remove" tag off a piece of furniture, you will not be punished.

Well, if nothing's going to happen, if there's no penalty, why are those tags there, anyway?

A little history: In the early part of the twentieth century, many unscrupulous manufacturers would stuff bedding and other furniture with all kinds of stuff – straw, horse hair, old rags – and worse. It wasn't just a quality control issue; it was a real public health hazard. Bedding and other furniture stuffing harbored lots of communicable diseases – including smallpox.

So the government devised a simple system to protect consumers: require manufacturers to put a list of components on their mattresses, pillows – anything that had stuffing in it. The consumers could read the "warning label" and know what was inside that pillow.

The "Do Not Remove" tag provided – still provides – important information to the consumer. The "ingredients" might be normally harmless, except to someone with certain allergies. And the

tag still keeps the manufacturer honest.

The "Do Not Remove" tag is there to warn the manufacturer, not the user, that attempts to deceive or hide information from consumers will have serious legal consequences.

The Jewish people have their own irremovable tag – our Jewish soul deep inside. G-d Himself places the "Do Not Remove" tag inside each of us, certifying that the Jewish essence of our souls can never be defiled, despite the soul being "stuffed" into a physical body.

We often face unscrupulous "manufacturers." The *yetzer hara* — our negative drive from within — or outside forces, want us full of inferior, harmful, selfish stuff. They seek to dismiss the importance of *mitzvot* (commandments) and the celebration of Jewish holidays, misreading the lessons of Jewish history, discouraging Jewish pride — failing to acknowledge that the centuries of self-sacrifice come from our very essence.

But we need only look at our "Do Not Remove" tag to remind ourselves that the Highest Authority has guaranteed the immutable sanctity of our souls. When we rely on the Highest Authority, following His manufacturer's guidelines, we can also be sure that we can transform the physical world around us — we can make a world filled with goodness and kindness, of the highest quality.

As for the last half of the phrase—"Under Penalty of Law"—we are assured that ultimately, in the days of Moshiach, the enemies of Israel shall perish, and the promise made to Abraham—those who bless you will be blessed—will be fulfilled.

# SLICE OF

Discover. Discuss and Debate



People of every age and background use JNet to study the weekly Torah portion, discuss the history of Judaism, analyze the *Talmud*. and discover Kabbala. The following are short interviews with JNet partners.

Arthur Finkle is 79 years old, from Langhome, Pennsylvania. He is an author and has been a JNet partner since 2009.

I had a *chavrusa* (one-on-one study partner) for 25 years and before he passed away, he requested that I continue learning through JNet.

I learn with Aaron Leib Dukes from St. Louis Park. We are in the process of covering our eighth tractate in *Talmud* and when there is time, Aaron shares with me a talk from the Rebbe on the weekly Torah portion.

When we learn we always try to find lessons in our day to day life. I've been keeping kosher my whole life and I've read books on its reasoning but, recently when I came across a discussion about kosher in the Talmud, since I know the background, it gave this *mitzva* (commandment) a whole new meaning for me.

I'm able to say that at this point we don't just have an intellectual conversation but a very strong friendship. Though we live far away from each other, we know each other's families. We sometimes just call each other to ask for advice on things happening in our day-to-day life

New Emissaries

Chaya Silver, from Plano, Texas, is a retired Preschool Teacher and has been a JNet partner

I heard about JNet from Rabbi Mendel Block at Chabad of Plano. I learn with Yehudis Kravitsky from Brooklyn. We are studying the deeper meaning of the morning prayers and we also discuss the upcoming holidays.

I always enjoyed learning but especially with JNet. It makes me feel good. It's not just learning that makes me feel good. It gives me meaning and purpose in my life. The more I learn with my chavrusa the more I want to be a better person. I love to share what I learn with my friends. I'm not just bringing meaning into my own life but I am making the world a better place.

I can just say that I love my chavrusa! We really connect well and we make sure not to miss a week. JNet is just a real gift!

Mathew Iofe is 27 years old and lives in Bensonhurst, New York. He is a NYC Crime Investigator and a JNet partner since 2019.

I stay with a close friend in Crown Heights for Shabbat every week and daven (pray) at Empire Shteeble. That is where I heard about JNet.

I currently learn with Dovid Zirkind from Brooklyn. I'm learning how to read Hebrew. JNet has strongly affected me. I'm able to daven (pray) now when I go to shul, and I generally feel a much stronger connection to my Judaism.

Meryl Abrams, age 60, lives in Princeville, Hawaii on the Island of Kauai. She has been a JNet partner since 2012

It was possibly the Chabad rabbi who told me that if I'm interested in learning more, which I was, I should look into JNet. I thought it sounded fantastic, and I signed up! I was amazed at how JNet doesn't charge for their services, I wish everybody would take advantage!

I learn with Malka Philips from Brooklyn. We mostly cover the Torah portions, but occasionally we veer off towards discussing the Jewish holidays, or other insights that she brings in. She's very deep and has a wonderful understanding, and is exceedingly knowledgable. She's able to bring in stories that really hit home, and bring the Torah to reality. She's just fantastic.

Both my parents are Jewish, but I never really used to feel very Jewish, and I didn't marry a Jewish man either. I was busy exploring other religions, and was generally not very connected

Rabbi Mendel and Esty Khutoretsky established a new Chabad

Center on the Sunshine Coast in **Queensland**, **Australia**. They joined

the team of Chabad of Rural and Regional Australia (RARA) which

services the Jewish population in Australia's remote communities.

The Sunshine Coast encompasses beach resorts, surf spots and

rural hinterland in Southern Queensland on Australia's east

coast, south of Brisbane. Rabbi Shlomo and Channa Fuchs are

joining the team of emissaries at the Chabad House of Hendon in

London, England. The Fuchs will be focusing on adult education,

currently via zoom or socially-distanced classes. They have been

delivering Shabbat packages to members of their community at

their homes as well. Rabbi Effy and Shayna Block are opening a

new Chabad Center in St Kilda, Melbourne, Australia. St Kilda,

is a flourishing and vibrant community. The new center will be a

warm haven for meaning, connection, learning and bonding.

to Judaism at all. But more and more, over the past years, Judaism has started meaning a lot more to me. I'm proud to be Jewish, and I want to share it with my kids too. I've also had a lot of support from our rabbi here, Rabbi Michael Goldman

JNet is such an amazing organization, how it connects people all around the world. It's really impacted my life, and my son, too, has been affected through my involvement. Shortly before his Bar Mitzva, someone introduced him to Zack Gilbert, and he was fantastic, and there began my son's JNet journey. Zack has brought him a Jewish pride, someone to ask his questions to, especially with everything in this pandemic. There aren't many Jews here, but he's become a real friend to him. Even when he got married and moved to Israel, he takes interest and keeps up the relationship. If my son didn't have someone here like this, he wouldn't really be caring too much for Judaism. He's truly made a difference in my

Hymie Genderson, age 51, is from Chapel Hill, North Carolina. He has been a JNet partner since

I heard about JNet through Rabbi Zalman Bluming, the local Chabad rabbi. I learn with Aron Glevzer from Brooklyn I'm currently studying Chassidic philosophy. We either learn a Chassidic discourse or a talk of the Rebbe on the current Torah portion.

JNet has brought me a lot closer to Judaism. My level of observance has gone up significantly: from putting on Tefilin, celebrating mitzvot and Jewish holidays, to having a special place in my week for Shabbat. Before COVID-19, I'd go to shul every Saturday morning, something I did not do before joining JNet.

JNet has shown me how small the world is! Rabbi Bluming has a son who was learning in a yeshiva in Westchester at the time. My chavrusa and I worked out that he was actually roommates with this boy!

From all of Chabad, the one man who I had been learning with for seven years at that point, iust happened to be together with the son of my Chabad rabbi. I found this to be true Divine Providence!

JNet – Jewish Learning Network, provides the opportunity to take the time to study any area of Torah on any level in any language with a study partner. To become a JNet Study Partner call 347-770-JNet, or email info@jnet.org. A division of Merkos L'Invonei Chinuch

## The Rebbe

from correspondence of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

18th of Cheshvan, 5724 [1963]

Greeting and Blessing:

I received your letter of the 14th of Cheshvan with the enclosure. You are, of course, guite right in writing that the purpose of education is not merely the increase of knowledge, but the actual training and upbringing to live the Jewish way of life. This is especially true in our day and age, in view of the adverse influence of the environment, etc., which makes it all the more imperative to instill a goodly measure of Yiras HaShem [reverance for G-d] into the children. Indeed this is the purpose of the Torah and Mitzvoth [commandments], as it is written

There can be no difference of opinion as far as the purpose of Jewish education is concerned, which applies everywhere. There can only be a difference of approach and method as to how to attain this goal, and this may vary from generation to generation, from city to city and sometimes even from classroom to classroom.

Another point to remember is that inasmuch as parents are not always permeated with the idea that true Jewish education is truly vital for their children, it is necessary to follow the approach suggested by our Sages, of blessed memory. This is why it is often useful to emphasize the good side effects of Jewish education, until they will eventually understand also the essential aspects involved.

With regard to the guestion which you write towards the end of your letter, namely, about your present job and your difficulty with Parnosso [livelihood], etc., an improvement would depend on those who must be approached and who have the final say. Therefore, it would be well for you to consult fully with such persons that know them personally, and who can judge their reaction to any particular approach.

MOSHIACH

The essence of a person's life is reflected in his

breathing processes. Indeed, the Hebrew word

for "breath," neshima shares the same letters as

MATTERS

May G-d, who feeds and sustains the whole world out of His generous and ample Hand, also give you your Parnosso with Kashrus and peace of mind, so that you should be able to concentrate on your efforts to strengthen and spread true Yiddishkeit to the utmost of your capacity.

Hoping to hear good news from you, With blessing,

15 Teves, 5739 [1979]

Greeting and Blessing!

.. Education – in the general "worldly" outlook – is commonly regarded as a process of acquiring formal knowledge, in terms of basic and higher education, which is to be accomplished in the juvenile and adolescent stages of life. Thereafter one is considered "educated," having completed one's course of education.

Needless to say, this is not the Torah concept of Chinuch [education]. The Torah is "our life and the length of our days." Just as life itself is a continuous and uninterrupted process from the moment of birth to the last breath, so is Torah Chinuch a lifelong uninterrupted process. There can be a change of pace, intensity, and emphasis in the multifaceted aspects of Chinuch, depending upon age, activity, etc.; but there is never a time in a Jew's life when he, or she, can be said to have completed their course of Chinuch.

In the same vein, Torah Chinuch is more than a process of accumulating knowledge. For, since the Torah is "our life," it calls for a constant effort to strengthen and invigorate this life-giving process in the everyday life. Moreover, since the purpose of life is, as our Sages expressed it, "I was created to serve my Creator," each and every moment of the Jew's life must be consecrated to this purpose in constant striving to serve the Creator all the better from day to day. This includes, of course, the Great Principle of our Torah, V'Ohavto Lre'Acho Komoicho, which means that together with one's personal advancement in Chinuch one must do everything possible to promote the same kind of Chinuch among other Jews. Besides, no Chinuch can be complete in isolation...

the Hebrew for "soul," neshama. This is what is

necessary at present, to connect the essence of our

being to the essence - neshama - of Moshiach.

The awakening of the core of our being must

be reflected in a concern for the fundamental

existence of every Jew, including that they have

everything that they need for the upcoming festival

of Chanuka, (The Rebbe, Shabbat Toldot, 2 Kisley, 1991)

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

The ninth of Kislev (this year Wednesday, Nov. *25) is the birthday and vartzeit of Rabbi Dov* Ber, the second Chabad Rebbe, known as "the Mitteler Rebbe." Through his explanations of the teachings of his father, Rabbi Shneur Zalman, he brought more Chasidic philosophy into this world.

*Uniting the physical and the spiritual was* embodied in the Mitteler Rebbe's person, illustrated by the following two examples.

The Tzemach Tzedek (his son-in-law and successor) said, "If my father-in-law's finger was cut. Chasidut would flow out. not blood." The Mitteler Rebbe's life force was Chasidut.

When the Mitteler Rebbe was arrested on slanderous charges and imprisoned, his doctor told the Russian authorities that they must allow him to teach his Chasidim. He explained: "Just as you give food to prisoners to ensure their existence, so too you must allow him to teach Chasidut, because his life depends on it."

The authorities saw that this was the truth and agreed. They allowed 50 Chasidim to enter his prison room twice a week to listen to him deliver a Chasidic discourse.

Ultimately, the Mitteler Rebbe was released on the 10th of Kisley, one day after his birthday. But, unfortunately, he and his Chasidim were unable to celebrate the first anniversary of his release. For, the Mitteler Rebbe passed away on the 9th of Kislev, his birthday, at the relatively young age of 54.

Concerning the Mitteler Rebbe's day of Redemption, the Rebbe said. "The Mitteler Rebbe's redemption will lead to the ultimate expression of G-dliness in the world which characterize the revelations of Moshiach." May this take place immediately.



### L'ZICHRON CHAYA I MUSHKA לזכרון חי'ה י מושקא

The name of our publication has special meaning It stands for the name of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson (obm), wife of the Rebbe.



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WHO'S WHO

Eliezer was the trusted servant of Abraham, given to him by King Nimrod. Eliezer resembled Abraham physically, though they were not related, and he was in charge of Abraham's household and wealth. He was sent by Abraham to find a wife for Isaac from relatives in Charan. He arrived in a miraculously short amount of time. Also, when he prayed to G-d that he find a fitting wife for Isaac, Rebecca appeared even before he had finished praying. Many years later, Eliezer and his son Alinos helped Jacob prepare for possible battle against his Esau.